

# Neocon Imperialism, 9/11, and the Attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq

By David Ray Griffin

02/27/07 "[ICH](#)" -- -One way to understand the effect of 9/11, in most general terms, is to see that it allowed the agenda developed in the 1990s by neoconservatives—often called simply “neocons”---to be implemented. There is agreement on this point across the political spectrum. From the right, for example, Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke say that 9/11 allowed the “preexisting ideological agenda” of the neoconservatives to be “taken off the shelf . . . and relabeled as *the* response to terror.”<sup>1</sup> Stephen Sniegoski, writing from the left, says that “it was only the traumatic effects of the 9/11 terrorism that enabled the agenda of the neocons to become the policy of the United States of America.”<sup>2</sup>

What *was* this agenda? It was, in essence, that the United States should use its military supremacy to establish an empire that includes the whole world--a global *Pax Americana*. Three major means to this end were suggested. One of these was to make U.S. military supremacy over other nations even greater, so that it would be completely beyond challenge. This goal was to be achieved by increasing the money devoted to military purposes, then using this money to complete the “revolution in military affairs” made possible by the emergence of the information age. The second major way to achieve a global *Pax Americana* was to announce and implement a doctrine of preventive-preemptive war, usually for the sake of bringing about “regime change” in countries regarded as hostile to U.S. interests and values. The third means toward the goal of universal empire was to use this new doctrine to gain control of the world’s oil, especially in the Middle East, most immediately Iraq.

In discussing these ideas, I will include recognitions by some commentators that without 9/11, the various dimensions of this agenda could not have been implemented. My purpose in publishing this essay is to introduce a perspective, relevant to the debates about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the impeachment of President Bush and Vice President Cheney, that thus far has not been part of the public discussion.

# 1. Neoconservatives and Global Empire

The “neo” in the term “neo-conservative” is a remnant of the fact that the first generation neoconservatives, such as Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz, had moved to the right after having been members of the left. Kristol, often called “the godfather of neoconservatism,” famously defined neoconservatives as liberals who had been “mugged by reality.” No such move, however, has characterized most of the second-generation neocons, who came to dominate the movement in the 1990s. As Gary Dorrien says in *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana*, “the new neocons had never been progressives of any kind.”<sup>3</sup> The term “neoconservatism” is, in any case, used here to refer strictly to an ideology, not to any biographical facts about those who hold this ideology.

I mean “biographical facts” to include ethnicity. Although many of the prominent neoconservatives have been Jewish, leading some people to think that Jewishness is a necessary condition for being a neo-conservative, this is not so. As Dorrien points out, “a significant number of prominent neocons were not Jews.”<sup>4</sup>

This discussion has its primary importance in relation to Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. If neoconservatism is understood to be entirely a matter of ideology, not also partly a matter of biography, then there is no reason not to think of Cheney and Rumsfeld as neocons. As former neocon Michael Lind, says: “[N]eoconservatism is an ideology, like paleoconservatism and libertarianism, and Rumsfeld and Dick . . . Cheney are full-fledged neocons, . . . even though they are not Jewish and were never liberals or leftists.”<sup>5</sup>

Neoconservatism in its early decades was a multi-faceted phenomenon, but the focus here is on its foreign policy. Neoconservative foreign policy was originally oriented around opposition to Communism. This fact meant that the end of the Cold War produced a crisis for neocons. In 1991, after the fall of the Berlin wall, Podhoretz said that he was not sure what “America’s purpose should be now that the threat of Communism . . . had been decisively eliminated.” Five years later, he even published a eulogy to the movement, declaring it dead.<sup>6</sup>

## **Unipolarity**

Other neocons, however, believed that they had a new cause to champion. Already in 1986, Irving Kristol argued that the United States needed to move toward a foreign policy of “global unilateralism.” But that would be difficult, he pointed out, as long as America is “an imperial power with no imperial self-definition.”<sup>7</sup> The new cause was to shape this new self-definition, thereby getting Americans ready to accept a policy of global unilateralism.

As soon as the Cold War ended, this cause was taken up by others. At the close of 1989, Charles Krauthammer, one of the best-known neocon columnists, published a piece entitled “Universal Dominion,” in which he argued that America should work for “a qualitatively new outcome--a unipolar world.”<sup>8</sup> In 1990, he argued that unipolarity has already arrived and that the United States, being the “unchallenged superpower,” should act unilaterally. Saying that “[t]he alternative to unipolarity is chaos,” Krauthammer explained what unipolarity requires of the United States: “unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce them.”<sup>9</sup> The following year, in an argument for a “robust interventionism,” he said of this unipolar world: “We Americans should like it---and exploit it.”<sup>10</sup>

## **The 1992 Defense Planning Guidance**

The first effort to turn such thinking into official policy came in 1992, which was the last year of the presidency of George H. W. Bush and hence also the end of Dick Cheney’s tenure as secretary of defense. Before leaving office, Cheney had Paul Wolfowitz, the undersecretary of defense for policy, prepare---with the help of his top assistant, Lewis “Scooter” Libby---a draft of the Pentagon’s “Defense Planning Guidance” (DPG).<sup>11</sup> Stating that America’s “first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival,” this DPG draft was, in Andrew Bacevich’s appraisal, “in effect a blueprint for permanent American global hegemony.”<sup>12</sup>

This draft produced, after portions of a leaked copy were published in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*,<sup>13</sup> an outpouring of criticism. The ideas did get some support, especially from neoconservative publications such as the *Wall Street Journal*, which praised the draft’s plan for a “Pax Americana.”<sup>14</sup> But most of the reaction was critical. Senator Alan Cranston complained that the Bush administration was seeking to make the United

States “the one, the only main honcho on the world block, the global Big Enchilada.”<sup>15</sup> Senator Robert Byrd said that the document’s stance seemed to be: “We love being the sole remaining superpower in the world and we want so much to remain that way that we are willing to put at risk the basic health of our economy and well-being of our people to do so.”<sup>16</sup>

Seeking to calm the waters, especially because it was an election year, the administration of George H. W. Bush distanced itself from this draft, depicting it, in Bacevich’s words, “as the musings of an insignificant lower-tier appointee acting without official sanction.”<sup>17</sup> Although Wolfowitz would refer to it as “my 1992 memorandum” many years later,<sup>18</sup> he claimed at the time that he had not seen it.<sup>19</sup> Cheney also claimed not to have seen it, even though one long section began by acknowledging “definitive guidance from the Secretary of Defense.” This latter fact has, incidentally, been pointed out by David Armstrong, who calls this draft an early version of Cheney’s “Plan . . . to rule the world.”<sup>20</sup> Although this draft came to be known as “the Wolfowitz plan,” it is important to recognize that it was Cheney who, in Dorrien’s words, “hatched the original unipolarist blueprint in 1992.”<sup>21</sup> Indeed, as Nicholas Lemann has reported in the *New Yorker*, the DPG draft resulted from a secret team that Cheney had set up in the Pentagon “to think about American foreign policy after the Cold War.”<sup>22</sup>

The recognition that this unipolarist blueprint was inspired by Cheney is important in light of the unprecedented power that he would exercise in the second Bush administration. As presidential historian Douglas Brinkley would say in 2002: “Cheney is unique in American history. . . . He is the vortex in the White House on foreign policymaking. Everything comes through him.”<sup>23</sup>

In any case, Cheney, under pressure from the White House, had the document significantly rewritten by Libby, in language more acceptable at the time. For example, whereas the first draft spoke of *spurning* collective action through the United Nations, this new version spoke of *strengthening* the U.N.<sup>24</sup> Cheney put an end to this brief public debate about the wisdom of a unipolarist foreign policy by having this softer version, which was later published,<sup>25</sup> leaked to the press.<sup>26</sup>

## The 1990s and PNAC

This rewriting did not mean, however, that the ideas were dropped by Cheney and other neoconservatives. Indeed, after the election was over, Cheney, before leaving office, put out another revision, in which some of the neo-imperial language was restored.<sup>27</sup> Then Zalmay Khalilzad, who had joined Cheney's team in 1991, put out a book early in 1995 entitled *From Containment to Global Leadership? America and the World after the Cold War*, which expresses quite forthrightly the idea of preventing, by military force if necessary, the rise of any rival power.<sup>28</sup> In 1996, Robert Kagan, "who emerged in the 1990s as perhaps the most influential neocon foreign policy analyst,"<sup>29</sup> argued that the United States should use its military strength "actively to maintain a world order which both supports and rests upon American hegemony."<sup>30</sup> In 1998, Kagan and William Kristol, who in 1995 had founded the *Weekly Standard* (which quickly became the main organ of neocon thinking), wrote that unless America takes charge, we will have "world chaos, and a dangerous twenty-first century."<sup>31</sup> In January of 2001, as the Bush-Cheney administration was ready to come to power, Kagan criticized "Clinton and his advisers" for "having the stomach only to be halfway imperialists."<sup>32</sup>

It is important to understand the development of this neoconservative ideology, given the fact that after 9/11, the neocon agenda became the agenda of the United States. As Halper and Clarke said in 2004, "if one wishes to understand the direction of American foreign policy today, one must read what neo-conservatives were writing ten years or more ago."<sup>33</sup>

The most important development within the neocon movement in the 1990s was William Kristol's founding, in 1997, of a unipolarist think tank called the Project for the New American Century (PNAC).<sup>34</sup> Closely related to the American Enterprise Institute ideologically and even physically and financially, PNAC differed primarily in focusing entirely on foreign policy.<sup>35</sup> In its "Statement of Principles," PNAC called for "American global leadership," asking whether the United States has "the resolve to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests."<sup>36</sup>

In September of 2000, just three months before the Bush-Cheney administration took office, PNAC published a 76-page document entitled *Rebuilding America's Defenses (RAD)*. Saying that "[a]t present the

United States faces no global rival,” *RAD* declared that “America’s grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position” and thereby “to preserve and enhance [the] ‘American peace.’” To “enhance” the “American peace” means, of course, to increase the size of the American empire. Explicitly referring back to the Cheney-Wolfowitz Defense Planning Guidance draft of 1992, *RAD* said that “the basic tenets of the DPG, in our judgment, remain sound.” The continuity between the two documents is no surprise, partly because Libby and Wolfowitz are listed as participants in the production of this 2000 document.<sup>37</sup>

What is said in the PNAC’s documents is highly important because many of PNAC’s early members, including Elliott Abrams, John Bolton, Eliot Cohen, Paula Dobriansky, Zalmay Khalilzad, Richard Perle, Peter W. Rodman, James Woolsey, and---most significantly---Cheney, Libby, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz, became central members of the new Bush administration. PNAC neocons thereby took key positions in the Vice President’s Office, the Pentagon, and the (only semi-independent) Defense Policy Board. They did so well primarily because of Cheney, who was put in charge of the transition team, and secondarily because of Rumsfeld, after Cheney chose him to head the Pentagon.<sup>38</sup>

### **9/11 and Empire Talk**

With the new administration in place, neocon commentators such as Krauthammer became even more explicit and exuberant about the use of America’s power for imperial ends. Mocking Clinton for being concerned to be “a good international citizen” and praising Bush for understanding that “the U.S. can reshape, indeed remake, reality on its own,” Krauthammer said: “America is no mere international citizen. It is the dominant power in the world, more dominant than any since Rome. Accordingly, America is in a position to reshape norms . . . and create new realities. How? By unapologetic and implacable demonstrations of will.”<sup>39</sup>

However, it was not until after 9/11, and especially after the devastating assault on Afghanistan, that the neocon effort to get Americans to accept an imperial self-definition started showing widespread success. Early in 2002, Krauthammer, having noticed the difference, said: “People are coming out of the closet on the word ‘empire.’” Driving home his main message,

Krauthammer added that Americans needed to face up to the responsibilities entailed by the fact that they are now “undisputed masters of the world.”<sup>40</sup>

A year later, this unilateralist idea was voiced in the *Atlantic Monthly* by neocon Robert Kaplan, who argued that America should use its power unilaterally to “manage an unruly world,” leaving behind “the so-called international community,” especially the United Nations, with its “antiquated power arrangement.”<sup>41</sup>

9/11 and the 9/11 wars---meaning those that have been justified by appeal to the attacks of 9/11<sup>42</sup>---resulted in empire talk beyond the circles of neocons. Early in 2002, after the American assault on Afghanistan, Paul Kennedy, who had 15 years earlier been predicting America’s decline as a great power,<sup>43</sup> declared: “Nothing has ever existed like this disparity of power.” Describing America’s empire as the greatest of all time, he said: “Charlemagne’s empire was merely Western European in reach. The Roman empire stretched farther afield, but there was another great empire in Persia, and a larger one in China. There is, therefore, no comparison.”<sup>44</sup>

A very important development that same year was the publication of Andrew Bacevich’s *American Empire*, which closes by saying that the question before Americans is “not whether the United States has become an imperial power” but only “what sort of empire they intend theirs to be.”<sup>45</sup> Bacevich himself, while a conservative, strongly distanced himself from the imperial agenda of the neocons.<sup>46</sup>

But it was their agenda, not Bacevich’s cautionary critique, that would determine the “sort of empire” that the United States would seek to become during the Bush-Cheney administration. And it was 9/11 that allowed this agenda to be implemented. As Claes Ryn said, the neoconservatives “have taken full advantage of the nation’s outrage over 9/11 to advance their already fully formed drive for empire.”<sup>47</sup>

## **2. Military Omnipotence**

*The* tool for fulfilling this drive for empire, neocons have always held, is military power. To a great extent, in fact, the neoconservative movement began in reaction to the widespread view after the Vietnam war that American military power should never again be used for imperialistic purposes. In the early 1980s, rejecting the left’s conclusion that force had become “obsolete as

an instrument of American political purposes,” Norman Podhoretz argued that military power constitutes “the indispensable foundation of U.S. foreign policy,” adding that “without it, nothing else we do will be effective.”<sup>48</sup>

The Cheney-Wolfowitz DPG of 1992, having said that “[o]ur first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival,” added that “we must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a regional or global role.” These “mechanisms” referred, of course, to various kinds of military power.

### **Space and Full Spectrum Dominance**

The U.S. military in the 1990s developed concepts to attain the kind of military superiority envisaged in this document. One of these concepts was “Full Spectrum Dominance,” which, says Bacevich, is the attempt “to achieve something approaching omnipotence.”<sup>49</sup> He is here referring to a document entitled “Joint Vision 2010,” which was first published by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1996. Defining “Full Spectrum Dominance” as “the capability to dominate an opponent across the range of military operations,” this document says that it “will be the key characteristic we seek for our Armed Forces in the 21st century.”<sup>50</sup> Given the fact that the U.S. military was already dominant on the land and the water and in the air, the new component needed was dominance in space.

Space dominance was described in a 1997 document entitled “Vision for 2020,” published by the U.S. Space Command, a division of the Air Force. The unique mission of the Space Command is to “dominat[e] the space dimension of military operations.” By merging this “space superiority with land, sea, and air superiority,” the U.S. military will have Full Spectrum Dominance.<sup>51</sup>

This notion was further developed in the Pentagon’s “Joint Vision 2020,” which first appeared in 2000.<sup>52</sup> It speaks of full spectrum dominance as involving not just four but five dimensions: “space, sea, land, air, and information.” In addition, this document says, “given the global nature of our interests and obligations, the United States must maintain its overseas presence forces and the ability to rapidly project power worldwide in order to achieve full spectrum dominance.” This statement gives support to Bacevich’s



observation that after the end of the Cold War, “the Department of Defense completed its transformation into a Department of Power Projection.”<sup>53</sup>

PNAC’s *Rebuilding America’s Defenses* appeared in September of that same year. Written to influence the next administration, *RAD*’s main point was that “the next president of the United States . . . must increase military spending to preserve American geopolitical leadership.”<sup>54</sup>

Besides arguing for increased spending across the board, *RAD* argued in particular for increased funding for the U.S. Space Command. Saying that “the ability to have access to, operate in, and dominate the aerospace environment has become the key to military success in modern, high-technology warfare,” it advocated not only “missile defense” but also “placing . . . weapons in space.” The weapons, moreover, are not simply for defensive purposes, but also for “the ability to conduct strikes from space,” which will give the U.S. military a “global first-strike force.”<sup>55</sup>

### **The Revolution in Military Affairs**

This development of space-based weapons was presented as simply one part, albeit probably the most important part, of a more general transformation of the military that exploits the “revolution in military affairs” (RMA), which has been made possible by information technologies.<sup>56</sup> This RMA transformation of the military was said to be “sufficiently important to consider it a separate mission.”<sup>57</sup>

In spite of this importance, however, the authors of *RAD*, ever mindful of budgetary constraints and widespread commitment to more traditional ways, warned that the needed transformation would not occur quickly, at least if the present climate continued. In a statement that has been widely quoted in the 9/11 truth movement, they wrote that “the process of transformation, even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event---like a new Pearl Harbor.”<sup>58</sup>

The emphasis in *RAD* on exploiting the RMA to transform the Pentagon’s approach is no surprise, since one of the participants in the project to produce this document was Wolfowitz, who had long before fallen under the spell of Albert Wohlstetter (one of the models for “Dr. Strangelove”<sup>59</sup>). Wohlstetter had been the main early proponent of the ideas that came to be dubbed the “revolution in military affairs” by Andrew Marshall, who later

became the main proponent.<sup>60</sup> Marshall, who at this writing was still serving as the RMA guru in the Pentagon, numbers Wolfowitz, Cheney, and Rumsfeld among his disciples.<sup>61</sup>

Rumsfeld, in fact, was at the same time heading up a special commission to make recommendations about the military use of space. This “Rumsfeld Commission,” endorsing the idea of military transformation, including the weaponization of space, said that the United States should “[e]mploy space systems to help speed the transformation of the U.S. military into a modern force able to deter and defend against evolving threats directed at . . . [our] forward deployed forces.”<sup>62</sup> (In other words, although the language of “defense” and “deterrence” is used, part of the purpose of the space weapons is to prevent attacks on America’s *offensive* operations.) This report, interestingly, also used the Pearl Harbor analogy. Warning against the tendency to consider an attack on U.S. space satellites as too improbable to worry about, the report of the Rumsfeld Commission said:

History is replete with instances in which warning signs were ignored and change resisted until an external, “improbable” event forced resistant bureaucracies to take action. The question is whether the U.S. will be wise enough to act responsibly and soon enough to reduce U.S. space vulnerability. Or whether, as in the past, a disabling attack against the country and its people—a “Space Pearl Harbor”—will be the only event able to galvanize the nation and cause the U.S. Government to act.<sup>63</sup>

### **9/11 as the New Pearl Harbor**

The attacks of 9/11 were widely referred to as a new Pearl Harbor. President Bush reportedly wrote in his diary on the night of 9/11: “The Pearl Harbor of the 21<sup>st</sup> century took place today.”<sup>64</sup> Immediately after the attacks, many people, from Robert Kagan to Henry Kissinger to a writer for *Time* magazine, said that America should respond to the attacks of 9/11 in the same way it had responded to the attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, just as the attack on Pearl Harbor gave the United States the opportunity to enter World War II, which in turn allowed it to replace Great Britain as the leading imperial power, the attacks of 9/11 were widely regarded as an opportunity. Donald Rumsfeld stated that 9/11 created “the

kind of opportunities that World War II offered, to refashion the world.”<sup>66</sup> Condoleezza Rice reportedly told senior members of the National Security Council to “think about ‘how do you capitalize on these opportunities’ to fundamentally change American doctrine, and the shape of the world, in the wake of September 11<sup>th</sup>.”<sup>67</sup> In a public address, she said that “if the collapse of the Soviet Union and 9/11 bookend a major shift in international politics, then this is a period not just of grave danger, but of enormous opportunity.”<sup>68</sup> According to Bob Woodward, the president himself said that the attacks provided “a great opportunity.”<sup>69</sup> Only two days after 9/11, in fact, Bush said in a telephone conversation with Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Governor George Pataki of New York: “[T]hrough the tears of sadness I see an opportunity.” The next day, he reportedly used exactly the same words while talking to the press.<sup>70</sup>

Nicholas Lemann of the *New Yorker*, dealing with this response to 9/11 as an opportunity, reports that he was told by a senior official of the Bush administration (who insisted on anonymity) that, in Lemann’s paraphrase, “the reason September 11th appears to have been ‘a transformative moment’ is not so much that it revealed the existence of a threat of which officials had previously been unaware as that it drastically reduced the American public’s usual resistance to American military involvement overseas.”<sup>71</sup> We did not, of course, hear that stated publicly by any member of the Bush-Cheney administration.

The attacks of 9/11 also reduced Congressional resistance to providing increased funding for Pentagon programs. On the evening of 9/11 itself, Rumsfeld held a news briefing on the Pentagon attack. At this briefing, Senator Carl Levin, the chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was asked: “Senator Levin, you and other Democrats in Congress have voiced fear that you simply don’t have enough money for the large increase in defense that the Pentagon is seeking, especially for missile defense. . . . Does this sort of thing convince you that an emergency exists in this country to increase defense spending?”<sup>72</sup> Congress immediately appropriated an additional \$40 billion for the Pentagon and much more later, with few questions asked.

The attacks of 9/11, moreover, aided those who favored a transformation of the military along RMA lines. In the weeks before September 11, Bacevich reports, “military transformation appeared to be dead

in the water,” because the military brass were “wedded to existing weapons systems, troop structure, and strategy.”<sup>73</sup> But, Bacevich continues:

President Bush’s decision after September 11 to wage a global war against terror boosted the RMA’s stock. After 9/11, the Pentagon shifted from the business of theorizing about war to the business of actually waging it. This created an opening for RMA advocates to make their case. War plans . . . became the means for demonstrating once for all the efficacy of the ideas advanced by Wohlstetter and Marshall and now supported by . . . Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>74</sup>

After the removal of Saddam Hussein, Richard Perle, who had long shared Wolfowitz’s enthusiasm for Wohlstetter’s ideas, said: “This is the first war that’s been fought in a way that would recognize Albert’s vision of future wars.”<sup>75</sup>

These ideas for achieving military omnipotence became official policy with the publication, one year after 9/11, of the Bush-Cheney administration’s *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS 2002), which said: “We must build and maintain our defenses beyond challenge” so that we can “dissuade future military competition.”<sup>76</sup>

The conviction that 9/11 provided an opportunity was also reflected in NSS 2002, which said: “The events of September 11, 2001, . . . opened vast new opportunities.”<sup>77</sup> One of the things for which it most clearly provided an opportunity was the doctrine of preemptive-preventive war.

### 3. Preemptive-Preventive War

This hyphenated term is used here for clarity. The doctrine in question, which involves attacking another country even though it poses no immediate threat, is technically called “preventive war.” This doctrine, which violates international law as reflected in the charter of the United Nations, is to be distinguished from what is technically called “preemptive war,” which occurs when Country A attacks Country B after learning that an attack from Country B is imminent---too imminent to allow time for the U.N. to intervene. These technical terms, however, are problematic, because although preventive war, being illegal, is worse than preemptive war, to most ears “preemption” sounds worse than “prevention.” As a result, many people speak of “preemptive war”

when they mean preventive war. The term “preemptive-preventive war,” while somewhat cumbersome, solves this problem.<sup>78</sup>

### **Historical Emergence of the Doctrine**

This doctrine of preemptive-preventive war had been advocated by neocons long before 9/11. It was contained already in the Cheney-Wolfowitz Defense Planning Guidance of 1992, which said that the United States should use force to “preempt” and “preclude threats.”<sup>79</sup>

In 1996, Richard Perle and other neocons prepared a strategy paper entitled “A Clean Break” for Benjamin Netanyahu, who had recently been elected prime minister of Israel. This paper recommended that Israel, in making a clean break from previous strategies, establish “the principle of preemption.”<sup>80</sup>

In 1997, PNAC’s “Statement of Principles” argued that to exert “global leadership,” America needs to “challenge regimes hostile to our interests and values.”<sup>81</sup>

In 1998, a letter from PNAC, signed by Perle, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and 15 other members, urged President Clinton to “undertake military action” to eliminate “the possibility that Iraq will be able to use or threaten to use weapons of mass destruction.”<sup>82</sup>

### **The Doctrine of Preemptive-Preventive War after 9/11**

Although these neocons were anxious to have their doctrine of preemptive-preventive war accepted as national policy, this did not occur during the Clinton presidency or even during the first eight months of the Bush-Cheney administration. After 9/11, however, it did. “The events of 9/11,” observes Bacevich, “provided the tailor-made opportunity to break free of the fetters restricting the exercise of American power.”<sup>83</sup>

The idea of preemptive-preventive war, which came to be known as the “Bush doctrine,” was first clearly expressed in the president’s address at West Point in June 2002 (when the administration started preparing the American people psychologically for the attack on Iraq). Having stated that, in relation to the “new threats,” deterrence “means nothing” and containment is “not

possible,” Bush even took aim at the traditional understanding of preemption, saying: “If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long.” Then, using the language of preemption while really meaning preemptive-prevention, he said that America’s security “will require all Americans . . . to be ready for preemptive action.”<sup>84</sup>

## **NSS 2002**

However, although the West Point speech provided a first statement of this new doctrine, it was in *NSS 2002*, published that September, that the new doctrine was laid out at some length. The covering letter, signed by the president, says that with regard to “our enemies’ efforts to acquire dangerous technologies,” America will, in self-defense, “act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed.”<sup>85</sup> The document itself, saying that “our best defense is a good offense,” also states:

Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. The inability to deter a potential attacker, the immediacy of today's threats, and the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries' choice of weapons, do not permit that option. We cannot let our enemies strike first.<sup>86</sup>

To justify this doctrine, *NSS 2002* argues that the United States must “adapt” the traditional doctrine of preemption, long recognized as a right, to the new situation, thereby turning it into a right of anticipatory (preventive) preemption:

For centuries, international law recognized that nations need not suffer an attack before they can lawfully take action to defend themselves against forces that present an imminent danger of attack. . . . We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries. . . . The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, . . . the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.<sup>87</sup>

With this argument, the authors of *NSS 2002* tried to suggest that, since this doctrine of anticipatory preemption simply involves adapting a traditionally recognized right to a new situation, it involves no great change. But it does. According to the traditional doctrine, one needed certain evidence that the other country was going to launch an immediate attack. According to the Bush Doctrine, by contrast, the United States can attack another country “even if uncertainty remains” and even, more flagrantly, if the United States knows that the threat from the other country is not yet “fully formed.”

The novelty here, to be sure, involves doctrine more than practice. The United States has in practice attacked several countries that presented no imminent military threat. But it always portrayed these attacks in such a way that they could appear to comport with international law. The attack on North Vietnam after the alleged incident in the Tonkin Gulf provides an example. But “[n]ever before,” point out Halper and Clarke, “had any president set out a formal national strategy *doctrinethat* included [preventive] preemption.”<sup>88</sup> This is a step of great significance, because it involves an explicit statement by the United States that the basic principle of international law, as embodied in the United Nations, does not apply to its own behavior.

### **Zelikow as Primary Drafter of NSS 2002**

Max Boot, a neocon who has become well known through his newspaper columns, has described *NSS 2002* as a “quintessentially neo-conservative document.”<sup>89</sup> Now that the basic ideas of this document have been laid out, we can see the accuracy of his observation.

We can also see the importance of a still little-known fact: that Philip Zelikow, who would later become the executive director of the 9/11 Commission, was chosen by Condoleezza Rice to be the primary drafter of *NSS 2002*.<sup>90</sup>

According to James Mann in *The Rise of the Vulcans*, after Rice saw the first draft of this document (which had been prepared by Richard Haass, the director of policy planning in Colin Powell’s State Department), she “ordered the document be completely rewritten. She thought the Bush administration needed something bolder. . . . Rice turned the writing over to her old colleague, . . . Philip Zelikow.”<sup>91</sup> (Rice and Zelikow had worked together in the National Security Council in the administration of the first

President Bush; when the Republicans were out of power during the Clinton presidency, they wrote a book together; and then when she was appointed National Security Advisor for the second President Bush, she brought on Zelikow to help with the transition to the new National Security Council.) Given the content and tone of the document, one might assume that Cheney, Rumsfeld, or Wolfowitz had been involved in the process of creating it. According to Mann, however, “the hawks in the Pentagon and in Vice President Cheney’s office hadn’t been closely involved, even though the document incorporated many of their key ideas. They had left the details and the drafting in the hands of Rice and Zelikow, along with Rice’s deputy, Stephen Hadley.”<sup>92</sup>

Some insight into Zelikow’s views before coming to this task might be garnered from an essay he co-authored in 1998 on “catastrophic terrorism.” In this essay, which suggests that he had been thinking about the World Trade Center and a new Pearl Harbor several years prior to 9/11, Zelikow and his co-authors say:

If the device that exploded in 1993 under the World Trade Center had been nuclear, or had effectively dispersed a deadly pathogen, the resulting horror and chaos would have exceeded our ability to describe it. Such an act of catastrophic terrorism would be a watershed event in American history. It could involve loss of life and property unprecedented in peacetime and undermine America's fundamental sense of security, as did the Soviet atomic bomb test in 1949. Like Pearl Harbor, this event would divide our past and future into a before and after. The United States might respond with draconian measures, scaling back civil liberties, allowing wider surveillance of citizens, detention of suspects, and use of deadly force.<sup>93</sup>

In any case, in light of Zelikow’s close relationship with the Bush administration and especially his authorship of *NSS 2002*, we cannot take seriously the claim of the 9/11 Commission that it sought to be “independent.”<sup>94</sup> As executive director, he had tremendous power to shape the work of the Commission, deciding which issues it would investigate and which not, and he was primarily responsible for the final form of *The 9/11 Commission Report*.<sup>95</sup> The Family Steering Committee, which represented families of victims of the 9/11 attacks, vigorously protested his appointment, calling for “Dr. Zelikow’s immediate resignation” and for the “Commission to



apologize to the 9/11 families and America for this massive appearance of impropriety.”<sup>96</sup> But these calls were dismissed.

Given Zelikow’s close relationship with the Bush-Cheney administration and his own authorship of *NSS 2002*, it is certainly no surprise that, as I reported in *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions*,<sup>97</sup> there is no mention of imperial interests that might have served as motives for the Bush-Cheney administration to have orchestrated or at least permitted the attacks of 9/11. The Zelikow-led Commission did not, for example, mention that PNAC’s *Rebuilding America’s Defenses* had suggested that the transformation of the military, through which unipolarity could be enforced more effectively, could occur more quickly if there were to be “a new Pearl Harbor”; it did not mention that the administration had had plans, to be discussed below, to attack both Afghanistan and Iraq prior to 9/11; and it did not mention that 9/11 had been described as presenting “opportunities” by Bush, Rice, Rumsfeld, and, in fact, *NSS 2002*. Once we know of Zelikow’s authorship of that document, moreover, it is also no surprise to see that *The 9/11 Commission Report* contains a chapter---“What to Do? A Global Strategy”---that provides propaganda for the Bush-Cheney administration’s post-9/11 foreign policy.

I return now to the discussion of possible imperial motives for 9/11 within the Bush-Cheney administration.

#### **4. The Attack on Afghanistan**

Many times since the formal enunciation of the doctrine of preemptive-preventive warfare, the Bush-Cheney administration has defended it as necessitated by 9/11. In an address to the nation in 2004, for example, Bush said that the two lessons of 9/11 are that this country “must deal with gathering threats” and that it “must go on the offense and stay on the offense.”<sup>98</sup> The first victim of this claimed right to “go on the offense” was Afghanistan.

Although the attacks of 9/11 were, according to the official story, planned and carried out by a non-state organization, al-Qaeda, rather than by some state, the Bush-Cheney administration used the attacks as a pretext to launch attacks on *states*---attacks that had been planned *before* 9/11. The justification for this switch was provided by Bush’s address to the nation on

the evening of 9/11, in which he declared: “We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.”<sup>99</sup> The attack on Afghanistan was then justified on the grounds that the Taliban was “harboring” Osama bin Laden, the evil genius behind the 9/11 attacks, whom Bush on September 17 said he wanted “dead or alive” (after Cheney had said that he would willingly accept bin Laden’s “head on a platter”).<sup>100</sup>

But this was a pretext rather than the real reason for attacking Afghanistan--as illustrated by the fact that when the Bush administration had an opportunity to take bin Laden alive, it showed no interest. A week after 9/11, the Taliban said that it would hand OBL over---*if* the United States presented proof of his involvement in 9/11. But Bush refused to provide any such evidence, saying that there would be no negotiations or even discussion.<sup>101</sup> Again, four weeks after the U.S. attack on Afghanistan began, a Taliban spokesman said: "We will negotiate. But . . . [w]e are not a province of the United States, to be issued orders to. We have asked for proof of Osama's involvement, but they have refused. Why?"<sup>102</sup>

There are probably two answers to this question. First, there is much evidence that the Bush administration did *not* want bin Laden, either dead or alive. One part of this evidence consists of several reports that the U.S. military in Afghanistan deliberately let bin Laden escape more than once.<sup>103</sup> A second reason is that the Bush administration, besides knowing that bin Laden was not responsible for the 9/11 attacks, evidently decided that it could not even marshal convincing (albeit false) case that he was (as suggested by the fact that, after a White Paper presenting this proof was promised, it was never produced<sup>104</sup>). More recently, the FBI, in response to a query as to why does not list 9/11 as one of the crimes for which bin Laden is wanted, has said: “The reason why 9/11 is not mentioned on Usama Bin Laden’s Most Wanted page is because the FBI has no hard evidence connecting Bin Laden to 9/11”<sup>105</sup> (a rather astounding admission that, one might think, should have been reported on the nightly news and in *The New York Times*).

To understand the real reasons for the attack on Afghanistan, one needs to look at some developments prior to 9/11. One such development was the publication in 1997 of Zbigniew Brzezinski’s book *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*. As the subtitle shows, Brzezinski, while not a neoconservative, shared the

neocons' concern to maintain and enhance U.S. "primacy." Portraying Central Asia, with its vast oil reserves, as the key to world power, Brzezinski argued that America, to ensure its continued primacy, must get control of this region, which would mean establishing several military bases there.

However, Brzezinski added, American democracy posed an obstacle:

America is too democratic at home to be autocratic abroad. This limits the use of America's power, especially its capacity for military intimidation. . . . The economic self-denial (that is, defense spending) and the human sacrifice (casualties even among professional soldiers) required in the effort are uncongenial to democratic instincts. Democracy is inimical to imperial mobilization.<sup>106</sup>

Brzezinski, however, then suggested a way in which this obstacle could be overcome. Having said that in the United States "the pursuit of power is not a goal that commands popular passion," he then added: "except in conditions of a sudden threat or challenge to the public's sense of domestic well being."<sup>107</sup> The American people *would* be willing to make the economic and human sacrifices needed for "imperial mobilization," he suggested, if there were "a truly massive and widely perceived direct external threat."<sup>108</sup> The kind of threat he had in mind was suggested by his statement, earlier in the book, that the public was willing to support "America's engagement in World War II largely because of the shock effect of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor."<sup>109</sup>

It is possible that Brzezinski's discussion here inspired the statement about a "new Pearl Harbor" in PNAC's 2000 document, which can be read as a call for a false-flag operation that would provide a pretext for turning PNAC's agenda into official policy. The plausibility of this reading was increased, moreover, by a statement made by Brzezinski's during his warning, in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 1, 2007, that a "head-on conflict with Iran and with much of the world of Islam at large" was the likely outcome of the US frustration in Iraq. "A plausible scenario for a military collision with Iran," Brzezinski suggested, involves "a terrorist act in the U.S. blamed on Iran; culminating in a 'defensive' U.S. military action against Iran." Adding that a

“mythical historical narrative” for an expanded attack on Islamic countries “is already being articulated,” Brzezinski said that “9/11 [is being presented] as the equivalent of the Pearl Harbor attack.”<sup>110</sup>

Be that as it may, a more specific motivation for the post-9/11 attack on Afghanistan was provided by the “pipeline war” that was going on.<sup>111</sup> The Bush-Cheney administration supported--as had the Clinton-Gore administration until 1999--UNOCAL’s plan to build an oil-and-gas pipeline through Afghanistan, which was in competition with plans from oil companies based in other countries. What happened in 1999 was that UNOCAL, having become convinced that Afghanistan under the Taliban would never have the peace and stability needed for the pipeline project, decided to withdraw. Ahmed Rashid, finishing his book on the Taliban in mid-1999, wrote that the Clinton administration had shifted its support to the pipeline route from Azerbaijan through Georgia to Turkey, adding that “by now nobody wanted to touch Afghanistan and the Taliban.”<sup>112</sup>

When the Bush administration came to power, however, it decided to give the Taliban one last chance. This last chance occurred at a four-day meeting in Berlin in July 2001. Representatives of the Bush-Cheney administration, trying to persuade the Taliban to share power with US-friendly factions in a “unity government,” reportedly gave the Taliban an ultimatum: “Either you accept our offer of a carpet of gold, or we bury you under a carpet of bombs.”<sup>113</sup> When the Taliban refused, the Americans reportedly said that “military action against Afghanistan would go ahead . . . before the snows started falling in Afghanistan, by the middle of October at the latest.”<sup>114</sup>

- Given the fact that the attacks on New York and Washington occurred on September 11, the U.S. military had time to get ready, logistically, to begin its war in Afghanistan on October 7. By October 10, the U.S. Department of State had informed the Pakistani Minister of Oil that “in view of recent geopolitical developments,” UNOCAL was ready to go ahead with the pipeline project.<sup>115</sup>

- The contention that at least one of the purposes of the war was to support this project is suggested by the fact that the post-Taliban Prime Minister, Hamid Karzai, had previously been on UNOCAL’s payroll, as had been PNAC member Zalmay Khalilzad, who in 2001 was appointed Bush’s special envoy to Afghanistan and then in 2003 became the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan. As Chalmers Johnson said in 2004: “The continued collaboration of Khalilzad and Karzai in post-9/11 Afghanistan strongly suggests that the

Bush administration was and remains . . . interested in oil.”<sup>116</sup> (In March of 2005, Khalilzad would become the U.S. ambassador to Iraq.<sup>117</sup>)

- Still more evidence is provided by the placement of the military bases in Afghanistan. As one Israeli writer put it: “If one looks at the map of the big American bases created, one is struck by the fact that they are completely identical to the route of the projected oil pipeline to the Indian Ocean.”<sup>118</sup>

- The concern to enable an American oil company to build this pipeline should not, however, be considered the only or even the primary motivation. The larger concern, suggests Chalmers Johnson, was “to establish an American presence in Central Asia.” Evidence for this view is provided by the fact that the United States, besides establishing long-term bases in Afghanistan, had within a month after 9/11 arranged for long-term bases in Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.<sup>119</sup>

- The new Pearl Harbor that occurred on 9/11, therefore, allowed the United States to support UNOCAL’s pipeline project and, more generally, to fulfill the program, suggested by Brzezinski, of taking control of this region of the world.

The fact that 9/11 provided the necessary condition for the war in Afghanistan was stated by both Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld. In 2004, Wolfowitz told the 9/11 Commission that if the Department of Defense had asked Congress for permission to invade Afghanistan prior to 9/11, this request would not have been taken seriously. Rumsfeld, telling the Commission that “it can take a tragedy like September 11<sup>th</sup> to awaken the world to new threats and to the need for action,” said that prior to 9/11 the president could not have convinced Congress that the United States needed to “invade Afghanistan and overthrow the Taliban.”<sup>120</sup>

Afghanistan and the surrounding region was not, however, the primary target in the sights of the Bush-Cheney administration. That target was Iraq.

## **5. The Attack on Iraq**

Several neocons, including some who became central members of the Bush-Cheney administration, had been wanting to bring about regime change in Iraq ever since Saddam Hussein’s occupation of Kuwait in 1990. Leading voices for this policy included Cheney and Wolfowitz, who were then secretary and under-secretary of defense, respectively, and also Richard Perle, who chaired a committee set up by neocons called Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf. But this idea was opposed by President Bush along with General Colin

Powell, then chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Norman Schwarzkopf, the field commander, so it was not carried out.<sup>121</sup>

In 1992, Albert Wohlstetter, who had inspired Perle and Wolfowitz and other neocons, expressed exasperation that nothing had been done about “a dictatorship sitting on the world’s second largest pool of low-cost oil and ambitious to dominate the Gulf.”<sup>122</sup> (Wohlstetter’s statement reflected his conviction, expressed back in 1981, that America needs to establish forces, bases, and infrastructure so as to enjoy unquestioned primacy in the region.<sup>123</sup>)

In 1996, the “Clean Break” paper, written for Israel by Perle and other neocons, proposed that Israel remove from power all of its enemies in the region, beginning with Saddam Hussein. This 1996 document, in the opinion of Arnaud de Borchgrave, president of United Press International, “provided the strategic underpinnings for Operation Iraqi Freedom seven years later.”<sup>124</sup>

In 1997, Wolfowitz and Khalilzad published a statement arguing that “Saddam Must Go.”<sup>125</sup>

In 1998, Kristol and Kagan, in a *New York Times* op-ed entitled “Bombing Iraq Isn’t Enough,” called for “finishing the job left undone in 1991.”<sup>126</sup> Wolfowitz told the House National Security Committee that it had been a mistake in 1991 to leave Saddam in power. Also, writing in the *New Republic*, he said: “Toppling Saddam is the only outcome that can satisfy the vital U.S. interest in a stable and secure Gulf region.”<sup>127</sup> And the aforementioned letter to President Clinton from PNAC---signed by Cheney, Kristol, Perle, and Wolfowitz, among others---urged him to “take the necessary steps, including military steps,” to “remov[e] Saddam’s regime from power.” Then, getting no agreement from Clinton, PNAC wrote a similar letter to Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott, then the leaders of the House and the Senate, respectively.<sup>128</sup>

In 2000, PNAC’s *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*, pointing out that “the United States has for decades sought to play a more permanent role in Gulf regional security,” added: “While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein.”<sup>129</sup>

Given the fact that Cheney, Libby, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and other neocons were given central positions in the new Bush administration, it is not

surprising to learn, from two former members of this administration, that it came into office intent on attacking Iraq. Paul O'Neill, who was secretary of the treasury and hence a member of the National Security Council, has said that within days of the inauguration, the main topic was going after Saddam, with the question being not "Why Saddam?" or "Why Now?" but merely "finding a way to do it."<sup>130</sup> Richard Clarke, who had been the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, confirmed O'Neill's charge, saying: "The administration of the second George Bush did begin with Iraq on its agenda."<sup>131</sup>

Until the attacks of 9/11, however, no one had found "a way to do it." As neocon Kenneth Adelman has said: "At the beginning of the administration people were talking about Iraq but it wasn't doable. . . . That changed with September 11."<sup>132</sup> Bob Woodward makes the same observation in *Bush at War*, saying: "The terrorist attacks of September 11 gave the U.S. a new window to go after Hussein."<sup>133</sup>

However, even 9/11, by itself, was not a sufficient basis for getting the American people's support for an attack on Iraq. Not for lack of effort by Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz. On the afternoon of 9/11 itself, Rumsfeld said in a note to General Richard Myers—the acting head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—that he wanted the "best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. [Saddam Hussein] at same time. Not only UBL [Usama bin Laden]."<sup>134</sup> In the following days, both Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz argued that Saddam's Iraq should be, in Woodward's paraphrase, "a principal target of the first round in the war on terrorism."<sup>135</sup>

Colin Powell, however, argued that both the American people and other countries would at that time support an attack on Afghanistan, to do something about al-Qaeda, but not an attack on Iraq, since there was no evidence that it had anything to do with 9/11. He added, however, that after a successful campaign in Afghanistan, a war on Iraq would become more feasible. Bush accepted this argument.<sup>136</sup> In doing so, he was not rejecting the proposal to use 9/11 to justify an attack on Iraq, merely postponing its implementation: A plan for going to war in Afghanistan that Bush signed on September 17 also directed the Pentagon to begin planning military options for an invasion of Iraq.<sup>137</sup>

Stephen Sniegoski, explaining why the attack on Iraq could not be launched immediately, says: “[A]lthough the 9/11 atrocities psychologically prepared the American people for the war on Iraq, those horrific events were not sufficient by themselves to thrust America immediately into an attack on Iraq.” A “lengthy propaganda offensive” would also be needed.<sup>138</sup>

This propaganda offensive involved convincing a majority of the American people of the truth of two false claims: that Saddam Hussein had been behind 9/11 and that he possessed, or soon would possess, weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, with which he could attack America. This part of the story is too well known to need much rehearsal. The point to emphasize here is that although this later propaganda was necessary, its success depended on 9/11. Halper and Clarke say that “it was 9/11 that provided the political context in which the thinking of neo-conservatives could be turned into operational policy.”<sup>139</sup> Sniegoski, spelling out the point more fully, says:

The 9/11 attacks made the American people angry and fearful. Ordinary Americans wanted to strike back at the terrorist enemy, even though they weren’t exactly sure who that enemy was. . . . Moreover, they were fearful of more attacks and were susceptible to the administration’s propaganda that the United States had to strike Iraq before Iraq somehow struck the United States. . . . It wasn’t that difficult to channel American fear and anger into war against Iraq.<sup>140</sup>

Much of this channeling was done by the Bush-Cheney administration, especially Bush and Cheney themselves. In August of 2002, for example, Cheney declared that “there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction . . . [and] is amassing them to use . . . against us.”<sup>141</sup> In October, Bush said that, having “experienced the horror of September the 11th, . . . America must not ignore the threat gathering against us. Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof--the smoking gun--that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.”<sup>142</sup>

The administration was greatly aided in this propaganda offensive by neoconservatives outside the government, who “linked their preexisting agenda (an attack on Iraq) to a separate event (9/11).”<sup>143</sup> Through their incessant propaganda---most widely spread in Lawrence Kaplan and William Kristol’s *The War over Iraq: Saddam’s Tyranny and America’s Mission---*



“Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein were morphed into the same enemy” and “the war on terror and war in Iraq were joined at the hip.”<sup>144</sup>

This propaganda campaign was enormously successful. Shortly before the war on Iraq was launched, the two key ideas in the campaign---that Saddam Hussein had played a direct role in the attacks of 9/11 and that he was a threat because he had weapons of mass destruction---were accepted by 70 percent of the American people.<sup>145</sup> As a result, point out Halper and Clarke, the Bush-Cheney administration was “able to build the environment surrounding the terrorist attacks of September 2001 into a wide moral platform from which to launch a preemptive strike.”<sup>146</sup>

That this propaganda campaign would be successful would have been predictable. As Hermann Göring, one of the top Nazi officials, said: “[I]t is the *leaders* of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along. . . . All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked.”<sup>147</sup>

Accordingly, the fact that there were no Iraqis among the alleged hijackers does not mean that the desire for a pretext to attack Iraq could not have been one of the imperial motives behind the attacks of 9/11. The crucial precondition for the war in Iraq was a psychological state of mind in the American public---one of fear and anxiety combined with a desire for revenge---that would countenance the new doctrine of preemptive-preventive war. This state of mind was abundantly created by 9/11. Then, just as the ensuing propaganda offensive against Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban created almost unanimous acceptance of the war in Afghanistan, the propaganda offensive directed at Saddam Hussein was rather easily able to channel this fear, anxiety, and desire for revenge into a widespread feeling that a war to bring about regime change in Iraq was justified.

## **Conclusion**

The attacks of 9/11 allowed the imperialist agenda of leading neoconservatives to be implemented. Can we infer from this effect that the hope to have this agenda fulfilled was one of the motives for the 9/11 attacks? Of course not. One of the basic principles of criminal investigations, however, is the question: Who benefits? Those who most benefit from the crime are usually the most likely suspects. But an answer to that question cannot by

itself be used as proof of the suspects' guilt. The prosecution must also show that the suspects had the means and the opportunity to commit the crime. It must also present evidence that the suspects actually committed the crime---at least *indirect* evidence, perhaps by showing that they were the only ones who *could* have done it.

I have elsewhere presented evidence---what I first called *prima facie* evidence but now call *overwhelming* evidence<sup>148</sup>---that 9/11 was an inside job, orchestrated by leading members of the Bush-Cheney administration. This evidence includes many reasons to conclude that the official accounts of the World Trade Center collapses, the attack on the Pentagon, the crash of United Airlines Flight 93, and the failure of the U.S. military to intercept the other flights cannot be true. This evidence also includes many reasons to conclude that *The 9/11 Commission Report* involved a systematic cover-up of dozens of facts that conflict with the official conspiracy theory about 9/11, according to which the attacks were conceived and carried out entirely by al-Qaeda---evidence that instead points to official complicity. One example of this evidence is the fact that the Commission changed by about 45 minutes the time at which Vice President Cheney went down to the Presidential Emergency Operations Center under the White House, thereby indicating that he could not have been responsible, as evidence suggests, for allowing the strike on the Pentagon and ordering the downing of UA 93.<sup>149</sup>

Many people, to be sure, feel that there is no need to examine the evidence that the attacks were arranged by members of the Bush administration because they feel certain, on *a priori* grounds, that it simply would not have done such a thing. Having addressed most of those grounds elsewhere,<sup>150</sup> I have here dealt with only one of them, which is often phrased as a rhetorical question: What motive could they possibly have had for arranging attacks on their own citizens?

Having suggested that the motive was to have a pretext to turn the neocon agenda into national policy, I should add that it is probably only the neocons in office, and even only some of them, who should be suspected of involvement in the planning for 9/11. To say that 9/11 allowed the agenda of the neocons in general to be implemented does not imply that many or even any neocons outside the government were involved in the planning for, or even had advance knowledge of, the attacks of 9/11. About eight months after

9/11, for example, William Kristol and Robert Kagan wrote pieces urging the Bush-Cheney administration to undertake an investigation to see if the attacks might have been prevented. Gary Dorrien, reporting that this call “earned a sharp rebuke from Cheney,” adds that “the Bush administration had no intention of allowing an investigation on that subject.”<sup>151</sup>

No genuine investigation has been carried out to this day. If Congress would authorize such an investigation, the American people, I am convinced, would see that the grounds for impeaching Bush and Cheney are even stronger than those that have been part of the public discussion thus far. They would also see that the reasons for opposing the war in Iraq are even stronger than those publicly discussed thus far, because it was from the start an imperialistic war based on a false-flag operation (as well as additional lies). They would even see that, although many critics of the administration have said that we should pull our troops out of Iraq and put them in Afghanistan, our attack on that country was no more legitimate.

*This essay is a revised version of “Imperial Motives for a ‘New Pearl Harbor,’ ” chap. 6 of David Ray Griffin, [Christian Faith and the Truth Behind 9/11 : A Call to Reflection and Action](#) (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006). Griffin is professor emeritus at Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate University. His most recent books are **Whitehead’s Radically Different Postmodern Philosophy** and **Debunking 9/11 Debunking**.*

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## Notes

1. Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4. Halper and Clarke, identifying with the Reagan presidency, criticize the ideological agenda of the neocons from what they call a “center-right” perspective (5-7).
2. Stephen J. Sniegoski, “Neoconservatives, Israel, and 9/11: The Origins of the U.S. War on Iraq.” In D. L. O’Huallachain and J. Forrest Sharpe, eds., *Neoconned Again: Hypocrisy, Lawlessness, and the Rape of Iraq* (Vienna, Va.: IHS Press, 2005), 81-109, at 81-82.
3. Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 16.

4. Dorrien's examples are "William Bennett, Peter Berger, Francis Fukuyama, Zalmay Khalilzad, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Ernest Lefever, James Nuechterlein, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Michael Novak, Richard John Neuhaus, George Weigel, and James Q. Wilson" (*Imperial Designs*, 15).
5. Michael Lind, "A Tragedy of Errors," *The Nation*, February 23, 2004, online; quoted in Justin Raimondo, "A Real Hijacking: The Neoconservative Fifth Column and the War in Iraq," in O'Huallachain and Sharpe, eds., *Neoconned Again*, 112-24, at 123.
6. Norman Podhoretz, "After the Cold War," *Commentary* 92 (July 1991), and "Neoconservatism: A Eulogy," *Commentary* 101 (March 1996); both cited in Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 80.
7. Irving Kristol, *Wall Street Journal*, March 3, 1986; quoted in Gary Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 117.
8. Charles Krauthammer, "Universal Dominion: Toward a Unipolar World," *National Interest*, Winter 1989: 47-49.
9. Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, 1990.
10. Krauthammer, "Bless Our Pax Americana," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1991.
11. Department of Defense, "Defense Planning Guidance," February 18, 1992. Although Libby is usually considered the person who wrote this draft, Gary Dorrien says that it was actually written by Wolfowitz's aide Zalmay Khalilzad, who had been briefed on what it should say by Wolfowitz and Libby---with additional input from Andrew Marshall, Richard Perle, and Albert Wohlstetter (*Imperial Designs*, 39).
12. Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 44.
13. Patrick E. Tyler, "U.S. Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop: A One Superpower World," *New York Times*, March 8, 1992 (<http://work.colum.edu/~amiller/wolfowitz1992.htm>); Barton Gellman, "Keeping the U.S. First: Pentagon Would Preclude a Rival Superpower," *Washington Post*, March 11, 1992 (<http://www.yale.edu/strattech/92dpg.html>).
14. *Wall Street Journal*, March 16, 1992.
15. Quoted in Barton Gellman, "Aim of Defense Plan Supported by Bush," *Washington Post*, March 12, 1992.
16. Quoted in Gellman, "Keeping the U.S. First: Pentagon Would Preclude a Rival Superpower."
17. Bacevich, *American Empire*, 45.

18. Paul Wolfowitz, "Remembering the Future," *National Interest*, Spring 2000 ([http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m2751/is\\_2000\\_Spring/ai\\_61299040](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2751/is_2000_Spring/ai_61299040)).
19. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 39.
20. David Armstrong, "Dick Cheney's Song of America," *Harper's*, October, 2002.
21. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 142.
22. Nicholas Lemann, "The Next World Order: The Bush Administration May Have a Brand-New Doctrine of Power," *New Yorker*, April 1, 2002 ([http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa\\_FACT1](http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa_FACT1)). Lemann further reported that the first major product of this new thinking was a brief prepared by Wolfowitz to be presented to Cheney on May 21, 1990, at which time Cheney was also supposed to hear Colin Powell's proposal for revising U.S. foreign policy but did not. Cheney then, on the basis of Wolfowitz's proposal, briefed President Bush, who delivered a major foreign policy address on August 2 (the day that Iraq invaded Kuwait).
23. Brinkley's statement is quoted in "Cheney Is Power Hitter in White House Lineup," *USA Today*, August 28, 2002, which is quoted in Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 120.
24. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 42.
25. "Defense Strategy of the 1990s," Department of Defense, 1992.
26. Lemann, "The Next World Order."
27. "Defense Strategy for the 1990s," Department of Defense, January, 1993. Lemann, in "The Next World Order," reported that although this was an unclassified and hence "scrubbed" version of the official document, "it contained the essential ideas of 'shaping,' rather than reacting to, the rest of the world, and of preventing the rise of other superpowers."
28. Zalmay Khalilzad, *From Containment to Global Leadership? America and the World after the Cold War* (Rand Corporation, 1995).
29. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 81.
30. Robert Kagan, "American Power: A Guide for the Perplexed," *Commentary* 101 (April 1996).
31. William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Foreign Policy and the Republican Future," *Weekly Standard*, October 12, 1998.
32. Robert Kagan, "The Clinton Legacy Abroad," *Weekly Standard*, January 15, 2001; quoted in Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 85.
33. Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 110.

34. Ibid., 126.
35. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 68, 130.
36. Project for the New American Century, "Statement of Principles," June 3, 1997 (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm>).
37. Project for the New American Century (henceforth PNAC), *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century*, September 2000 ([www.newamericancentury.org](http://www.newamericancentury.org)).
38. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 142-43; Sniegoski, "Neoconservatives, Israel, and 911," 94-95.
39. Krauthammer, "The Bush Doctrine," *Time*, March 5, 2001 (<http://edition.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/time/2001/03/05/doctrine.html>).
40. Krauthammer's statements, originally published in Emily Eakin, "All Roads Lead To D.C.," *New York Times*, Week In Review, March 31, 2002, are quoted in Jonathan Freedland, "Is America the New Rome?" *Guardian*, September 18, 2002.
41. Robert Kaplan, "Supremacy by Stealth: Ten Rules for Managing the World," *Atlantic Monthly*, July/August, 2003.
42. See John McMurtry, "9/11 and the 9/11 Wars: Understanding the Supreme Crimes," in David Ray Griffin and Peter Dale Scott, eds., *9/11 and the American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out* (Northampton: Interlink Books, 2006).
43. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987).
44. Paul Kennedy, "The Eagle Has Landed," *Financial Times*, February 22, 2002.
45. Bacevich, *American Empire*, 244.
46. This distancing is especially evident in Bacevich's later book, *The New American Militarism*.
47. Claes Ryn, "The Ideology of American Empire," in O'Huallachain and Sharpe, eds., *Neoconned Again*, 63-79, at 65.
48. Norman Podhoretz, "The Reagan Road to Détente," *Foreign Affairs* 63 (1984), 452; "The Neo-Conservative Anguish over Reagan's Foreign Policy," *New York Times Magazine*, May 2, 1982; both quoted in Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 74.
49. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 133.
50. "Joint Vision 2010" (<http://www.dtic.mil/jv2010/jvpub.htm>).

51. General Howell M. Estes III, USAF, United States Space Command, "Vision for 2020," February 1997 (<http://www.fas.org/spp/military/docops/usspac/visbook.pdf>).
52. "Joint Vision 2020" (<http://www.dtic.mil/jointvision/jvpub2.htm>).
53. Bacevich, *American Empire*, 127.
54. PNAC, *Rebuilding America's Defenses*, 4.
55. Ibid., 38, 54, 30.
56. Ibid., iv, 6, 50, 51, 59.
57. Ibid., 62.
58. Ibid., 51.
59. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 45.
60. Ibid., 44-46; Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 152-64, 167-73. Richard Perle, who also became a Wohlstetter disciple at a young age, said of Wolfowitz: "Paul thinks the way Albert thinks" (Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 46).
61. "Andrew Marshall," *Source Watch*, Center for Media & Democracy ([http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Andrew\\_Marshall](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Andrew_Marshall)).
62. *Report of the Commission to Assess U.S. National Security Space Management and Organization* (<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/spaceabout.html>), 7.
63. Ibid., 15.
64. This according to the *Washington Post*, January 27, 2002.
65. Robert Kagan, "We Must Fight This War," *Washington Post*, September 12, 2001; Henry Kissinger, "Destroy the Network," *Washington Post*, September 11, 2001 (<http://washingtonpost.com>); Lance Morrow, "The Case for Rage and Retribution," *Time*, September 11, 2001.
66. "Secretary Rumsfeld Interview with the New York Times," *New York Times*, October 12, 2001.
67. Nicholas Lemann, "The Next World Order: The Bush Administration May Have a Brand-New Doctrine of Power," *New Yorker*, April 1, 2002 ([http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa\\_FACT1](http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa_FACT1)). The phrase in the inside quotation marks is a direct quote from Rice; the rest of the statement is Lemann's paraphrase.
68. "Remarks by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice on Terrorism and Foreign Policy," April 29, 2002 ([www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)).

69. Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 32.
70. "September 11, 2001: Attack on America: Remarks by the President in Telephone Conversation with New York Mayor Giuliani and New York Governor Pataki 11:00 A.M. EDT; September 13, 2001," available at [http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/sept\\_11/president\\_009.htm](http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/sept_11/president_009.htm); "Bush Vows to 'Whip Terrorism,'" Reuters, Sept. 14, 2001.
71. Lemann, "The Next World Order."
72. Department of Defense News Briefing on Pentagon Attack, 6:42 PM, September 11, 2001 (available at [http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/sept\\_11/dod\\_brief02.htm](http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/sept_11/dod_brief02.htm)). According to the transcript, the question was asked by Secretary Rumsfeld. But the flow of the discussion suggests that it came from a reporter. In either case, the 9/11 attacks were interpreted to mean that greater military spending was needed, "especially for missile defense."
73. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 173 (the second phrase in quotation marks was taken by Bacevich from Thomas E. Ricks, "For Rumsfeld, Many Roadblocks," *Washington Post*, August 7, 2001).
74. Ibid., 173.
75. Perle's statement is quoted by Bacevich (ibid., 173-74) from Neil Swidey, "The Mind of the Administration," *Boston Globe*, May 18, 2003.
76. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, henceforth *NSS 2002*([www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html)), 29-30.
77. *NSS 2002*, 28.
78. In using this hyphenated term, I follow the precedent of Catherine Keller in "Omnipotence and Preemption," in David Ray Griffin, John B. Cobb, Jr., Richard Falk, and Catherine Keller, *The American Empire and the Commonwealth of God* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).
79. Barton Gellman, "Keeping the U.S. First: Pentagon Would Preclude a Rival Superpower"; cited in Halper and Clark, *America Alone*, 141.
80. Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," June 1996 (<http://www.israeleconomy.org/strat1.htm>).
81. PNAC, "Statement of Principles," 1997 (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm>)
82. PNAC, Letter to President Clinton on Iraq, May 29, 1998 (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>).
83. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 91.



84. "President Bush Delivers Graduation Speech at West Point," June 1, 2002 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>).
85. *NSS 2002*, cover letter.
86. *NSS 2002*, 6, 15.
87. *Ibid.*, 15.
88. Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 142.
89. Max Boot, "Think Again: Neocons," *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2004 ([http://www.cfr.org/publication/7592/think\\_again.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/7592/think_again.html)), 18.
90. The fact that Zelikow was "involved in the drafting" of this document was revealed on PBS in *Frontline*'s "Interview with Barton Gellman" on January 29, 2003, shortly after Zelikow had become executive director of the 9/11 Commission. According to Gellman, a staff writer for the *Washington Post*, Zelikow had told him this during a telephone conversation the previous day. The fact that Zelikow was the primary drafter of *NSS 2002* was revealed in James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Viking, 2004), 316, 331.
91. Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans*, 316.
92. *Ibid.*, 331.
93. Ashton Carter, John Deutch, and Philip Zelikow, "Catastrophic Terrorism: Tackling the New Danger," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 1998, 80-94 (available at <http://cryptome.quintessenz.at/mirror/ct-tnd.htm>).
94. Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, the chair and vice chair, respectively, of the 9/11 Commission, say in their preface to *The 9/11 Commission Report* that they had "sought to be independent, impartial, . . . and nonpartisan" (xv). In their later book, *Without Precedent: The Inside Story of the 9/11 Commission* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), they reaffirm that they had been determined to be "nonpartisan and independent" (29).
95. According to Kean and Hamilton themselves, Zelikow provided the "overarching vision" for the report and, with the aid of his former coauthor Ernest May, prepared the outline, which he presented to the staff, assigning "different sections and subsections of it to individual staff members" (*Without Precedent*, 273). Finally, although various members of the Commission's staff wrote the first drafts of the various chapters, we learn from May, revised drafts were then produced by the "front office," which was headed by Zelikow (Ernest May, "When Government Writes History: A Memoir of the 9/11 Commission," *New Republic*, May 23, 2005).
96. Statement of the Family Steering Committee for The 9/11 Independent Commission, March 20, 2004 ([www.911independentcommission.org/mar202004.html](http://www.911independentcommission.org/mar202004.html)).

97. David Ray Griffin, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions* (Northampton: Olive Branch, 2005), chap. 10, "Possible Motives of the Bush Administration."
98. "President Addresses the Nation in Prime Time Press Conference," April 13, 2004 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040413-20.html>).
99. "Statement by the President in His Address to the Nation," September 11, 2001 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html>).
100. "Bin Laden Is Wanted: Dead or Alive, Says Bush," *Telegraph*, September 18, 2001 (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2001/09/18/wbush18.xml>).
101. "White House Warns Taliban: 'We Will Defeat You'" (CNN.com, September 21, 2001).
102. Kathy Gannon, Associated Press, "Taliban Willing To Talk, But Wants U.S. Respect" (<http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/focus/terrorism/archives/1001/w01taliban.html>).
103. For the various kinds of evidence, see David Ray Griffin, *The New Pearl Harbor*, chap. 8, or *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions*, chap. 6.
104. Francis Boyle, "No Proof, No Investigation, No Accountability, No Law" (<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/CAH/fab051702.html>). Boyle points out that a White Paper, entitled "Responsibility for the Terrorist Atrocities in the United States," was provided by British Prime Minister Tony Blair on October 4, 2001. But it began with the disclaimer that it "does not purport to provide a prosecutable case against Usama Bin Laden in a court of law."
105. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Most Wanted Terrorists (<http://www.fbi.gov/wanted/terrorists/terbinladen.htm>); the statement, made by Rex Tomb, Chief of Investigative Publicity for the FBI, is quoted in Ed Haas, "FBI says, 'No Hard Evidence Connecting Bin Laden to 9/11'" Muckraker Report, June 6, 2006 (<http://www.teamliberty.net/id267.html>).
106. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 35-36.
107. *Ibid.*, 36.
108. *Ibid.*, 212.
109. *Ibid.*, 212, 24-25.
110. "Senate Foreign Relations Committee Testimony—Zbigniew Brzezinski, February 1, 2007," Information Clearing House (<http://www.ichblog.eu/content/view/258/52>).

111. See Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), chaps. 12 and 13, entitled “Romancing the Taliban: The Battle for Pipelines.”

112. *Ibid.*, 75-79, 175.

113. Julio Godoy, “U.S. Taliban Policy Influenced by Oil,” Inter Press Service, November 16, 2001.

114. This according to Niaz Naik, the highly respected Pakistani representative at the meeting, as reported in George Arney, “U.S. ‘Planned Attack on Taleban,’” BBC News, Sept. 18, 2001. In a story in the *Guardian* entitled “Threat of U.S. Strikes Passed to Taliban Weeks Before NY Attack” (September 22, 2001), one of the American representatives was quoted as confirming that this discussion of military action did occur.

115. *The Frontier Post*, October 10, 2001, cited in Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, *The War on Freedom: How and Why America was Attacked September 11, 2001* (Joshua Tree, Calif.: Tree of Life, 2002), 227.

116. Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004), 178-79.

117. On his career, see “Zalmay Khalilzad,” Source Watch ([http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Zalmay\\_Khalilzad](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Zalmay_Khalilzad)).

118. *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 2002, quoting from the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv*.

119. Johnson, *Sorrows of Empire*, 182-83.

120. That Wolfowitz made this comment in a statement to the Commission was reported by Commissioner Jamie Gorelick. The statements by Gorelick and Rumsfeld are quoted in “Day One Transcript: 9/11 Commission Hearing,” *Washington Post*, March 23, 2004 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A17798-2004Mar23.html>).

121. Sniegoski, “Neoconservatives, Israel, and 9/11,” 86-87, citing Arnold Beichman, “How the Divide over Iraq Strategies Began,” *Washington Times*, November 27, 2002.

122. Albert Wohlstetter, “Help Iraqi Dissidents Oust Saddam,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 25, 1992.

123. Wohlstetter, “Meeting the Threat in the Persian Gulf,” *Survey* 25 (Spring 1981): 128-88; discussed in Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 191.

124. Arnaud de Borchgrave, “All in the Family,” *Washington Times*, September 13, 2004, online.

125. Paul D. Wolfowitz and Zalmay M. Khalilzad, “Saddam Must Go,” *Weekly Standard*, December 1997.

126. William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Bombing Iraq Isn't Enough," *New York Times*, January 30, 1998.
127. "Prepared Testimony of Paul D. Wolfowitz," House National Security Committee, U.S. Congress, September 16, 1998; Wolfowitz, "Iraqi Rebels with a Cause," *New Republic*, December 7, 1998.
128. PNAC, Letter to President Clinton on Iraq, January 26, 1998 (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>). PNAC, Letter to Gingrich and Lott on Iraq, May 29, 1998 (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqletter1998.htm>).
129. PNAC, *Rebuilding America's Defenses*, 14.
130. O'Neill is quoted to this effect in Ron Susskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004). O'Neill repeated this point in an interview on CBS's "60 Minutes" in January of 2004. Susskind, whose book also draws on interviews with other officials, said that in its first weeks the Bush administration was discussing the occupation of Iraq and the question of how to divide up its oil ([www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/01/09/60minutes/main592330.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/01/09/60minutes/main592330.shtml)).
131. Richard Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 264.
132. Quoted in Elizabeth Drew, "The Neocons in Power," *New York Review of Books*, 50/10 (June 12, 2003)
133. Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 83.
134. Reported by CBS News, September 4, 2002. This note, written by Rumsfeld's top aide, Stephen Cambone (who participated in PNAC's project to produce *Rebuilding America's Defenses*), is now available online (<http://www.outragedmoderates.org/2006/02/dod-staffers-notes-from-911-obtained.html>).
135. Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, 48-49.
136. *Ibid.*, 49, 83-85.
137. Glenn Kessler, "U.S. Decision on Iraq Has Puzzling Past," *Washington Post*, January 12, 2003 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A43909-2003Jan11.html>).
138. Sniegowski, "Neoconservatives, Israel, and 9/11," 101.
139. Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 230.
140. Sniegowski, "Neoconservatives, Israel, and 9/11," 108-09.

141. "Remarks by the Vice President to the Veterans of Foreign Wars 103<sup>rd</sup> National Convention," August 26, 2002  
(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html>).
142. "Remarks by the President on Iraq," October 7, 2002  
(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>).
143. Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 203; see also the entirety of their chap. 7, "The False Pretences."
144. *Ibid.*, 210, 209.
145. *Ibid.*, 201, 214.
146. *Ibid.*, 218.
147. Quoted in Gustave Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Co, 1947), 278. Gilbert was reporting a conversation he had with Hermann Göring on the evening of April 18, 1946, while the Nuremberg trials were going on.
148. I called it *prima facie* evidence in my first book on the subject, *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11* (Northampton: Olive Branch, 2004), xxiii. I call the evidence "overwhelming" in *Debunking 9/11 Debunking: An Answer to Popular Mechanics and Other Defenders of the Official Conspiracy Theory* (Olive Branch, April 2007). This latter book is now my most complete case against the official theory and hence my most complete argument that 9/11 was an inside job.
149. David Ray Griffin, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions* (Northampton: Olive Branch, 2005), 241-44.
150. See the introduction to *Debunking 9/11 Debunking*.
151. Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 168, citing Kristol and Kagan, "Time for an Investigation," *Weekly Standard*, May 27, 2002: 9-10, and Kagan and Kristol, "Still Time for an Investigation," *Weekly Standard*, June 10, 2002: 9-10.  
  
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